

HighworthLINK

HIGHWORTH'S COMMUNITY MAGAZINE BROUGHT TO YOU WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE CHURCHES OF HIGHWORTH



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Dear Reader

How many times a day do you laugh at yourself? That was my thought only this past weekend as we travelled back to Highworth after visiting my parents. In the nicest possible way, I'm the funniest person I know, but only because I'm so ridiculous! It's mostly the things I say. I'm originally from the northwest, just south of Manchester, and I'm convinced I grew up understanding a very unique kind of language. Here's an example.

'Well, he's full of vim!' I said, as an impatient and highly-pleased-with-his-noisy-exhaust young man sped past us. It occurred to me I may in fact be turning into a grumpy old lady, and then I laughed. Full of vim. I don't hear anyone using the word 'vim' any more and, as I pondered that thought, I realised that I've carried forward many of the funny phrases I grew up with.

'Well, I'll go to the foot of our stairs!'

'Good grief! It looks like piffy on a rock bun!'

'Will ya stop mithering me!'

'Careful ya don't fall on ya eyelashes!'

Do any of these phrases mean anything to you? Coming south of Birmingham (via a very circuitous route) has taught me that, whilst we all speak the same language, we use it very differently. In Birmingham I discovered 'Bostin'! In Norfolk, it was 'What a load of ole squit.' Here in Wiltshire I've learned 'Bulragging' and 'Hurkle'.

I'm in the process of writing down words and phrases I don't hear people commonly use. Perhaps I'll even write a book one day with all the funnyisms from my childhood.

Highworth and the surrounding areas have such a mix of locals and 'interlopers', so as you're having a read through this edition of LINK Magazine why not have a think about the comical phrases you remember or still use today and share them with me at editor@highworthlink.co.uk. It would be great fun to pop them in a future issue!



Rachael

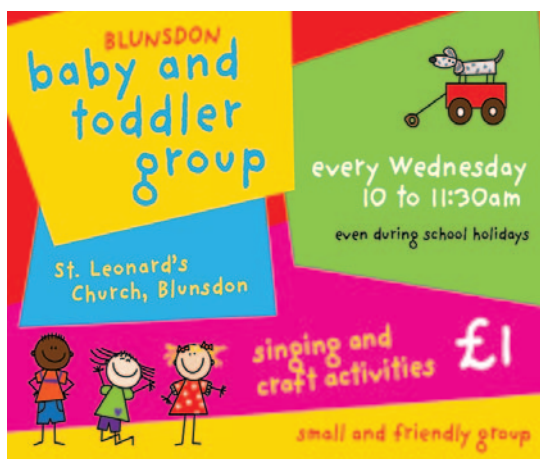
We're fundraising

We'll be hosting a Bake Sale, Tea, Coffee available on 17th May between 10:30 AND 12:30

We're raising funds for Samaritans. By donating (and eating cake!) you are helping Samaritans be there for anyone struggling to cope. All welcome and hope to see you at

Highworth Methodist Church, Vicarage Lane, SN6 7AD
Cakes from £1, Coffee/Tea £1 cup. Together we can make a change that saves lives.

Centralcoop



Front Cover image: Big Highworth Trustees at Awards Night

Courage

Recently, I have been thinking a lot about courage. I heard someone once say that courage is not the absence of fear; courage is being afraid and doing it anyway.

Courage is not only seen in huge achievements like saving someone's life, climbing a mountain, or facing cancer bravely – although those things do require immense courage. One of the things I have been so privileged to experience in my work in the community around Highworth is seeing the daily courage of individuals.

So often I see courage in daily choices; maybe where someone chooses not to allow their future unknowns to cause a spiral of worry, or maybe where someone chooses to reach out for help and support rather than take an overdose. Sometimes it's where someone asks for help with addiction or simply chooses not to be shaped by what others around them say and instead offer love and forgiveness.

We have just had Easter and of course, since I am a

Christian, I celebrate the most courageous act of Jesus Christ, who willingly faced and endured the suffering of the torturous Roman cross for the sake of humanity. God's love for the world meant He courageously gave His only Son so we could know the peace and relationship with Him we were created for.

Jesus' love meant He knowingly, and therefore courageously, faced death so we could know freedom.

What do you need courage for this year? Perhaps you simply need to worry less. Ask God. He wants to hear your voice. Through a relationship with Him, because of Jesus' courage, you can find all the courage and peace you need.



Kathryn Ford, Christians Against Poverty

Let's Get Physical with Swindon u3a!

Do you enjoy being active and keeping fit? Then one of the many u3a activity groups may be for you. The u3a – an organisation for people no longer in full-time employment – has a variety of interest groups where you can get together with like-minded people to learn and have fun. It offers a variety of physical fitness groups.

Tai Chi is a Chinese martial art that aims to improve strength, flexibility and balance. You could enjoy this therapeutic exercise in one of the u3a's three friendly groups. Perhaps you want to improve your health, strength, flexibility and sense of calm by joining one of our four yoga groups. The Iyengar yoga group uses breathing, stretching, exercise and relaxation to strengthen the body and increase awareness using principally, but not exclusively, Iyengar postures. In Chair Yoga most poses are done seated. The ladies' Stretch and Balance class aims to improve flexibility, balance and strength through exercise in a relaxed, friendly and non-competitive atmosphere.

If you enjoy walking the u3a boasts a number of different groups to cater for all abilities and

preferences, from a leisurely stroll to a long-distance walk.

For a full list of all our activity groups and all the other things we do, visit

www.swindonu3a.org.uk, telephone the office on 01793 614629 between 10am and noon on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or visit the u3a Facebook page.



Highworth Flower Club

On Thursday 1 May, 7:30pm at Warneford School, come and hear Sally Hardy present 'You've Seen It All Before'.

Sally is a national teacher as well as a NAFAS area demonstrator who has competed at Chelsea and worked in Westminster Abbey.

We hope you will join us in the school hall. Doors open at 7pm with plenty of space for parking in the school car park. Visitors welcome for a £7 admission fee. Contact Michele on 07798 817249 for more information or see our website: www.highworthfloralarts.co.uk.

A Year of Charitable Fundraising at Wrag Barn



Every year, the Captains of the Seniors, Men's and Ladies' sections choose a charity to support and the response from the members is always incredible. It's not just about the money raised but the willingness of so many to contribute their time and effort towards fundraising.

On Friday 14 March a number of representatives from the Seniors section assembled in the Spike Bar to support last year's Seniors Captain David Brownsell as he handed over a cheque for £8,220 to Marie Curie. Peter, a representative of the charity, explained how the money would help provide end-of-life care for anyone with a terminal illness. He made an important point: While many people plan for birth, very few plan for the end of their lives. Talking to loved ones about final wishes is something many put off but it makes a huge difference to the family providing or arranging care.

The Seniors section has now raised £25,022 since 2021. This ongoing effort shows how much the Wrag Barn community is willing to give.

The Men's section, under the captaincy of Shaun Judd, raised £3,443 for CALM (Cancer and Leukaemia Movement). This local charity works within the Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust area to improve the quality of life for children in treatment and give support to their families. Thanks to Zurich's match funding, arranged by Curtis (a member of Shaun's family) the total doubled to £6,886. This will go directly to the support network which CALM provides as the charity endeavours to keep costs to a minimum and there are no paid employees.

The Ladies' section, though smaller in number, raised £3,594 over two years for Kidney Research UK. Former Ladies' Captain Suzanne Hunt said, "We mustn't forget the men who often came up to me and put a tenner in my hand for my charity. Very lovely random acts of generosity."

A huge thank you to everyone who donated, organised or helped in any way. Your support makes a real difference.

Verity Manners

Do You Have an Hour a Month to Spare?

The Highworth LINK Magazine has been at the heart of this community for over 50 years. We rely solely on volunteers to ensure the magazine is delivered to every home in Highworth and the outlying areas. In fact, you wouldn't be reading this if it weren't for the small army of people who are committed to ensuring the magazine is delivered free of charge.

We're all so busy these days, I get it. But if you fancy feeling warm and fuzzy knowing you're involved with something which makes a difference to so many, get in touch with me at editor@highworthlink.co.uk. I'd love to have you on board.

We really need you.

Rachael, Editor

Fun, Sweat and Tears

On 4 June I'm setting off for Burundi to take part in 'Bike for Burundi', raising money for the work of Great Lakes Outreach (GLO). I'll be cycling with a group of intrepid cyclists from all over the world – seven exhilarating, gruelling days on the roads of Burundi, averaging 60 miles per day with 38,000 ft of elevation.

The ride has run for over ten years, raising tens of thousands of dollars. In addition, I'll visit some GLO projects and see the impact of the fundraising.

Burundi is a beautiful and well-resourced nation, filled with bold, passionate people. It's bordered by The Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, and Rwanda. Much of its western border is the world's second-largest freshwater lake, Lake Tanganyika.

The country has suffered terrible genocides rooted in tribal tensions, like Rwanda but far less publicised. Following the 2015 election, political unrest suffocated the economy which has not yet recovered. Over 400,000 fled the country and over 100,000 were



internally displaced. Some have returned but many are still refugees in bordering countries. Only this month an article in The Telegraph highlighted the plight of those now trying to escape from The Democratic Republic of Congo due to renewed fighting by M23 rebels there.

Great Lakes Outreach (GLO) works with visionary local leaders to transform Burundi through education, sport, business, healthcare and more, bringing hope to thousands of the most vulnerable.

They identify, equip and empower the best local leaders of passion, integrity, gifting and vision to transform the nation. GLO identifies exceptional Christian leaders in Burundi and helps

them to develop and increase self-sufficiency. The results are exciting and encouraging.

If you feel able, please support me by making a donation through my JustGiving page. Just search 'Robert Grist'.

Rob Grist

Cotswold Farm Gardens

Join us for our Open Weekend, between Saturday 31 May and Saturday 1 June, from 2pm and 5pm. We are supporting the National Garden Scheme (NGS) and we are also open by appointment through the year.

This is a beautiful Arts and Crafts Cotswold garden in a stunning location, overlooking a quiet valley on descending levels with terraces designed by Norman Jewson in the 1930s. Enclosed by Cotswold stone walls and yew hedges, the garden has all-year-round interest. Highlights in June include colourful herbaceous planting, roses, alpine and a magical bog garden.

Entrance is £7.50 (pre-booking available via the NGS website for the weekend or on-site contactless payment); free entry for children with an adult. Tea, coffee and cakes (in aid of the local WI and A Rocha). Plants will also be on sale.

Cotswold Farm, Duntisbourne Abbots, GL7 7JS. We are five miles NW of Cirencester on the A417.

For more information, telephone 07845 122165, or see our website at www.cotswoldfarmgardens.org.uk.



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Join Prospect Hospice's Starlight Walk

Prospect Hospice's much-loved Starlight Walk returns on Saturday 28 June, inviting the community to come together under the stars in celebration of the hospice's 45th anniversary. This special evening is a chance to honour loved ones, reflect, and raise vital funds for local hospice care.

Walkers can choose between 10k or 15k routes, starting and finishing at The Deanery Academy in Swindon. Along the way, a remembrance area in the Town Gardens will offer a peaceful space to pause and pay tribute to those who hold a special place in their hearts.

CEO Jeremy Lune shares the event's significance: "The Starlight Walk is a cherished tradition, bringing people together in remembrance and celebration, all while supporting the vital care we provide."



Don't miss this unforgettable evening of community, remembrance, and support. Sign up today at www.prospect-hospice.net/starlight.

Highworth Gardening Club

The next meeting of this thriving club is on Tuesday 20 May. The speaker is Paul Green and his talk is entitled 'Dark and Desirable' – a general talk on 'dark' plants. He will also bring lots of plants for sale.

We meet in the Highworth Community Centre and start at 7:30pm. Visitors are always welcome, entrance £5.

For information, please contact Trish or Norman on 01793 762805.

Trish Jeffrey

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Highworth Community Church

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www.highworthcommunitychurch.org

Learning and Growing at Southfield Junior School

World Book Day

We had an amazing day celebrating World Book Day at Southfield Junior School. The children really got into the spirit of things by dressing up as their favourite character, word or author, and took part in an array of book related activities. It was wonderful to see so many creative costume ideas – even the teachers got involved!

Years 3 and 4 looked at the book 'I Talk Like a River', about the author's own experiences of having a stutter. This picture book captures the experience of coming to terms with speech disfluency and explores themes of self-acceptance, family support, nature and embracing difference. Classes Cherry, Willow and Sycamore created art work of their own safe spaces using watercolours and mixing techniques.

We had wonderful creations of natural spaces. The children also wrote poetry as if they had a stammer, thinking carefully about the thoughts and feelings of others.

Years 5 and 6 looked at the book 'Listen: How Evelyn Glennie, a Deaf Girl, Changed Percussion'. This inspiring picture book tells the true story of world-famous deaf percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie. It is a story of music, of obstacles, of strength and of hard work. Oak, Elm and Rowan classes also wrote poetry, stepping into the shoes of a person with a hearing impairment and how this might impact their day to day lives.

The children's work has now been displayed on the school's 'windows and mirrors' display for all to enjoy.

We would like to say a special thanks to the Highworth Library for allowing us to visit throughout World Book Day. The children had a wonderful time exploring the



library and for some this was their first time! The children took part in a treasure hunt and used their book tokens in exchange for a new book.

Here's what our children had to say about the day...

"I loved visiting the library – they have so many books. I hadn't been before."

"I loved dressing up. It's fun seeing everyone else dress up too."

"I loved the treasure hunt at the library – we got to get a book to keep too."

Mrs. Kimberley O'Sullivan, Head of School



Visit to the STEAM Museum

This term, the children in Years 5 and 6 have been delving into the history of WWII. To enhance their learning, the children were fortunate to visit the STEAM Museum where they participated in two immersive workshops that brought history to life.

The first workshop provided the children with a gripping experience of what it would have been like during an air raid. They learned about the vital role of air raid wardens and heard the chilling sound of the air raid alarm. The highlight of this session was stepping into an authentic Anderson shelter giving the pupils a true sense of the fear and resilience experienced by families during the war.

In the second workshop, the children explored the significant contributions made by women during the

war. Through an interactive and engaging session, the pupils dressed up in period costumes and acted out scenes that illustrated the challenges and triumphs for families on the home front.

Sylvie, a Year 6 pupil, said, *"I really enjoyed our trip to the STEAM Museum. We loved dressing up as evacuees and learned a lot about air raids and women's roles during the war. My favourite part was experiencing the air raid shelter."*

The visit to STEAM provided the children with a hands-on, memorable experience that deepened their understanding of WWII and left them with lasting memories of this important period in history.

*Mrs. Kimberley O'Sullivan,
Head of School*



Computer Club and Coding

This term Years 5 and 6 have been given the opportunity to attend an after-school computer club. The children are encouraged to try new things or to expand on the software and hardware that has already been used in lessons. Some children have been creating PowerPoint presentations on work that they

are currently doing in topic lessons and some have been creating web pages about their hobbies.

For those who want to code, they can create animations and interactive stories in Scratch either on their own or by using the 'Code Club, Learn to Code' website. On that same website, children have been discovering the foundational concepts of creative

projects using AI applications and technologies. They have been using hands-on projects on different platforms and tools and will go on to look at voice and facial recognition.

Raspberry Pi Foundation have lots of different applications for children and adults to use. If you are interested, visit them at www.codeclub.org/en/learn-to-code. Their projects have step-by-step instructions which are very easy to follow.

Good luck and have fun coding!

Mrs. Ruth Law



Summer Starting

*Summer starting,
Sea waves,
Flowers blooming bright,
Seagulls squawk,
Planes fly high,
Games played,
Yummy ice cream eaten,
Bikes rode,
Car rides everywhere,
BBQs and pizza ovens,
Summer soon turns to autumn.*

I love summer, especially the swimming pools and playing in the garden. The weather is just perfect at the moment and it's only spring – can you believe it?! I'm already playing in the garden with my sister!

Have a good May and see you in June!

Constance Davenport

Kids Matter at Highworth Community Church

Here at Highworth Community Church (HCC), we've been making some changes for the provision of our youngest members.

In the Bible, Jesus makes a passionate effort to bring to the attention of His disciples the importance of children in the Kingdom of God and so at HCC we want to honour every person who comes through the door, whether they are 4 or 94. We meet at Warneford School each Sunday, and one big move to achieve honouring everyone has been relocating our Sunday morning children's work to the Dance Studio – it's been a huge success. The larger space and flexibility of a dividing wall between two sides of the space has enabled us to create a really inclusive, creative and welcoming place for the children to enjoy.

We use half of the space to host the activities and run a fun and engaging programme each week, and the other half is a multi-purpose sensory space designed with children with additional needs in mind. The sensory space provides a calm area for children of all ages in which to decompress and explore if they are struggling to engage with the main activity. The space includes a calm-down tent, a sensory circuit, and different sensory activities each week.

Our weekly sessions include crafts and creativity, singing and dancing, interactive stories, and lots of fun games. We hold HCC Kids **every Sunday from 11am to 12:10pm** in the Dance Studio at Warneford School for children in primary school.

Families are welcome to join our church service from 10:30am and then the children go out to HCC Kids after 30 minutes. If you have any children under primary school age, you are welcome to stay with your children in our crèche area. We would love to see you there to join in the fun on a Sunday morning!

Heather Wilson

Organised by Highworth Community Church, Charity Number 11080002

HCC Kids

Church for primary age children: games, crafts and stories!

11:00 am- 12:10 pm
@ Highworth Warneford School, SN6 7BZ

Look out for our flag- we meet in the Dance Studio.
Join us at 10:30 am in the school hall for church together first!
Contact Jon Hares: 07701303760

Cakes, Coffee and Sustainability

Can you believe it's been six months since Weigh It Up moved to the bustling Market Square? What started as Michelle and Matt Aherne's dream to help cut down plastic and food waste in Highworth has turned into a thriving eco-friendly shopping hub!

Locals are loving the switch to zero waste shopping – many start by refilling a washing-up liquid bottle or grabbing some Bombay mix, and before they know it they're doing their whole weekly shop. But it's not just about ditching plastic – it's about saving money, too! The average household wastes £600 a year on food – imagine what you could do with that extra cash. Buying only what you need means less waste and more pounds in your pocket.

Now, let's talk about coffee, because who doesn't love a perfectly brewed cup? The new coffee shop inside

Weigh It Up serves up organic delights from Bristol's Wogan Coffee Roasters, a third-generation roastery that believes great coffee shouldn't cost the earth. And how about popping a cake or savoury snack with that coffee? Locally sourced cakes and ingredients mean that Matt and Michelle are extending their range. Why not drop in to sample the sensational surprises?

As Michelle puts it, "We're all about delicious food with sustainability at the heart." So why not stop by, enjoy a coffee and a bite to eat, and embrace the zero-waste way? After all, as Zero-Waste Chef Anne-Marie Bonneau says, "We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly."



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Highworth-based Christian charity Educación Plus has worked with young people in the shanty towns of Costa Rica, Central America, for 30 years. We've shared their joys and sorrows as they live - and die - side by side with deadly drug dealers and the literal murder and mayhem pushed by them.

Come and meet our International Director Juan Carlos and David, one of our young Costa Rican leaders who grew up there on **Friday 30 May**, 7:30pm, at the United Reformed Church, High Street, Highworth.

Keith Holder



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May Time with Highworth and District Lions

Well, doesn't time fly! Mother's Day has come and gone, Easter is over, and here at the Lions charity shop we are looking forward to the famous Highworth May Day celebrations on Saturday 3 May.

The Lions will be having a brilliant tombola and toy sale with a 'Name the Teddy' competition. We will also have free games for all, kindly donated by Charles Baxter.

Recently one of Shrivenham Riding School's brilliant riders (pictured) was presented with a certificate, donated by our very own Lion Hilary Stokes, for their jumping skills. A fantastic achievement!

Donations ongoing:

- Shrivenham riding school to help the disabled, £850.
- Wiltshire air ambulance, £1,500.
- Support reserves for elderly coach trip in September, £1,100.
- Bob Cook disabled games, £300.
- Support reserves for Marwell June outing for disabled, £440.
- CAP local family support, £600.



In closing, we report with sadness the passing to higher service of Past President Lion Frieda Cox. A long-standing, valued member of the club who supported both the local community and the Lions objectives for over 25 years. The club sends sincere condolences to her family, friends, and fellow Lions.

Lechlade Gardening Club

On Wednesday 14 May we will be holding a plant sale. Further details of this will be sent out to club members nearer the time, or you can find details on our website at www.lechladegardeningclub.org.uk.

There will also be a coach trip on **Friday 30 May** to David Austen Roses with an optional talk about rose care and cultivation.

Our usual meetings are held on the **second Wednesday of the month** at 7:30pm in the New

Memorial Hall Lechlade where there is ample parking. Membership is £5 per person per annum, after which it is £2 to attend each meeting, or £3 for visitors who are always most welcome. Membership also entitles you to 10% off plants at Burford and Bampton Garden Centres if plants are not already discounted. Current membership cards have to be shown at the checkouts.

Barbara McNaught

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Great News for Local Gift Shop

We are excited to share some fantastic news with you: Highworth Emporium has been named a finalist in The Greats Gift Retailer Awards 2025!

The Greats Awards initially launched 23 years ago to recognise and reward the very best gift retailers and they are now universally recognised as being a mark of true excellence (we like to think of them as the Oscars of the gift industry).

We are therefore extremely proud to be announced finalists in not just one but two categories: Independent Gift Retailer of the Year (West and South West), and Best In-Store/Window Display.

This is an incredible achievement marking our ninth time reaching the finals. Having previously won three Greats trophies we're thrilled to be recognised again among the best gift retailers in the UK.

As we share our exciting news, we would like to take the opportunity to thank our customers for their continued support; we couldn't feel prouder to be part of such a thriving community.

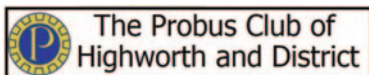
Wish us luck – although just being nominated makes us feel as though we've won – and we'll see you in the Emporium soon where you can expect to be greeted by some extra happy faces!

Aga Marsden



Highworth and District Probus Club

We meet at The Cold Harbour in Blunsdon on alternate Tuesdays at 10:30 am. We welcome retired professional and business men with no upper age limit and we also welcome visitors as guests at any of our meetings.



With no regular meeting on **Tuesday 13 May**, we recommence the schedule on **Tuesday 27 May** with

Lewis Lawton presenting a talk on 'The History of Broadcasting' followed by 'Highworth Oddities' by Bryan Lawton on **Tuesday 10 June**.

Take a look at our website www.highworthprobus.co.uk for more information about our group and events.

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Westrop School Sing at Wembley

26 members of Westrop School's Key Stage 2 choir travelled to Wembley Arena on Wednesday 19 March to take part in 'Voice in a Million' (VIAM).

VIAM is a unique educational concert featuring 6,000 young school children aged 7 to 18 years old. This event was created to celebrate the creativity, self-expression, and unique voices of all children. It celebrates inclusion and highlights children in the care

system by working together with Adoption UK.

Parents of the Westrop Choir were invited to travel on the coach with the choir, but once arriving in London at 1pm were able to have free time until the show started.

The choir made their way to their allocated seats in the Arena after lunch at TGI Fridays, and every child taking part wore matching VIAM t-shirts whilst they sang and danced to the 12 pop songs they had rehearsed.

The show ran from 7:15pm to 10pm and was a great success with a good time had by all – such a wonderful and worthwhile experience. The coach journey back home with a busload of tired people was very quiet and we eventually pulled up into the school grounds at 12:30am on Thursday morning!

Well done Westrop Choir – another proud moment for our school!

Mrs. Sam Humphreys



Changes at Visit Highworth

There are some new faces on the Visit Highworth committee, ready to take it onto its next exciting phase! Take a look at our photo to see the new team.

We would like to thank former Chair Ian Webb and Vice-Chair Lesley Towner for all the work they have done for Visit Highworth over the years.

We would love to have more volunteers to work in the information centre or help with the many events we have coming up. If you have a couple of hours or more to spare, please drop in to chat with us.

There is a wealth of wildlife to be discovered in Pentylands Country Park and in the fields that surround it. Our Wildlife Walks, which take about two hours, are a chance to explore the area and to learn how to spot and identify an amazing variety of birds, butterflies, insects in general and, sometimes, mammals. Mammals are more elusive, but it is always the highlight of a walk when one or more



puts in an appearance. With wildlife, you never know – and that's the fun of it! You can come to look or you can bring a camera and learn how to take pictures of the different things we see.

If you are interested in joining the Visit Highworth team or taking part in one of our

Wildlife Walks, please contact us (email: enquiries@visithighworth.co.uk, telephone: 01793 764440) or simply drop in for a chat.

Iona Sadler



(l to r) Paul Moore (Secretary), Iona Sadler (Chair), Joan Webb (Treasurer), Keith Smith (Vice-Chair), Julia Rose (Facilitator), and Ian James (Business Manager)

GRAND OPENING

We're celebrating our new office launch on Highworth May Day.

Join us for drinks, sweet treats, and the chance to win a weekend in the Cotswolds, a hamper or a trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens.

We look forward to seeing you!

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Meet Stuart Gould – To Rock Bottom and Back

You've probably seen Stuart Gould in the High Street. Brightly dressed, gregarious, and a tad overwhelming. We, of course, don't see ourselves. We conceal a lot from everyone, including from ourselves.

Stuart explains, "Although I've lived in Swindon now for 33 years, I still consider Highworth as my hometown. All my friendships, my football, my schooling and my work have happened in Highworth."

Despite his parents Colin and Sue separating in his teens, Stuart remains firmly attached to both and has made his own family with Sharron and their two lovely daughters.

In his early 40s, self-employed and the main breadwinner, his pressure cooker finally erupted into a panic attack that led him to hospital. The ECG showed all normal. Luckily, he met a doctor who explained what was going on: "Your brain has been working 100% on 'work', Stuart, and it's not spent any time at all on looking after you."

It was a eureka moment for Stuart. He sought redemption in self-discovery and his favourite band of Leeds lads – The Wedding Present. "But I'd got to the point where there was no joy... everything was grey." The multi-coloured Stuart was a crumbling façade.

In the dead of night, he reached for whisky and pills but his botched attempt to end it all finally prompted a visit to his doctor. Then followed failed trials of

various medicines and endless days in bed. Finally, they cracked it with the right medication; the intervention that empowered a slow self-discovery. "The tablets got me out of bed."

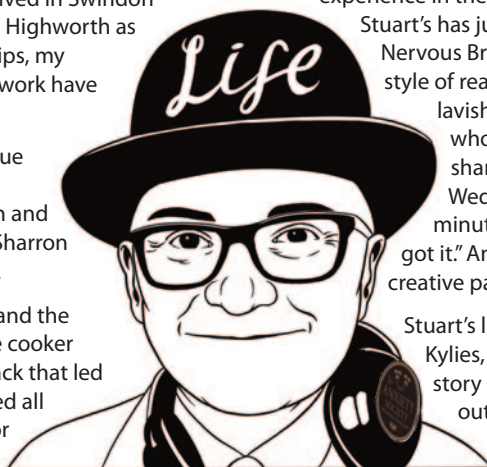
After years of recovery and drawing on all his experience in the print and comic book trades, Stuart's has just published his story 'My Nervous Breakdown'. True to his preferred style of reading, "it's light on words," but lavishly illustrated by Lee Thacker, who Stuart met through their shared obsession with The Wedding Present. "Within five minutes of reading the script, he'd got it." And so followed the perfect creative partnership.

Stuart's lifetime football mates, The Kylies, wrote in the foreword: "Stu's story illustrates that if someone as outgoing and colourful as him, with a loving family and many friends, can slip into a mental health crisis then it can happen to anyone. Most of all, Stu's story is one of hope."

Now 59, Stuart has embarked on a creative vocation in writing, publishing, public speaking, entertaining children, and campaigning about mental health. He's back... in this rather magical thing we call life!

Adrian Young

Interested in talking? Stuart would love to hear from you at stuartlloydgould@outlook.com, and on Facebook @stuartlloydgould.





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Local Mum Takes on Two Epic Feats of Endurance

Rhae Honey, a 42-year-old firefighter and mother from Blunsdon, will undertake two significant challenges within two weeks to support Compton Care and seeks your assistance.

Compton Care provided Rhae's dear friend Paula and her family help and support in their greatest time of need. The staff were so caring, attentive and compassionate, and she wants to help to ensure that other families can continue to count upon Compton's services and staff in their toughest times.

At Compton Care, they believe life with a complex and incurable illness doesn't have to be limiting. They work with patients to inspire, support, and encourage to take charge of their lives – because being alive isn't the same as feeling alive.

On the **12 July**, Rhae and her friend Andy will take on Race to the Stones: a 62-mile run along the stunning Ridgeway, starting in Lewknor (Oxfordshire) and finishing in Avebury (Wiltshire), all within 24 hours.

Then 11 days later Rhae will take on the Lord Bilston Big Challenge, embracing the National Three Peaks Challenge whilst cycling between each mountain. This involves a gruelling 28 miles of hiking and 560 miles of cycling over four days.

Rhae has competed in many difficult challenges but this is definitely her toughest to date, and some close



Paula (l) and Rhae (r)

friends have said "her craziest yet." She would be forever grateful for your support to reach her £1,500 target. If you would like to donate, please visit her Just Giving Page ('Rhae's fundraiser for Compton Care Group').

Rhae would like to thank you from the bottom of her heart as all your support will help so many families during their toughest times as they continue to receive all the support and care they deserve.

Highworth Ukulele Club

Highworth Ukulele Club is a great local club which has been going since 2019. We play for fun and consist of mixed ability players.

Recently we had some new beginners join us and after three weeks of us showing them what to do they are now playing their ukuleles and singing along with us.

There is no need to go out of Highworth to join this club as we meet on **Monday afternoons** at the Highworth Community Centre.

If you're interested in joining us, get in touch with Peter on 07769 298692 or email highworthukuleclub@gmail.com.



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Big Highworth Celebrates Community Award Winners

We were delighted to celebrate so many local unsung heroes at our inaugural awards.

The winners are:

- Volunteer of the Year awarded to Paul Newton-Smith for his work for Highworth Historical Society.
- Citizen of the Year awarded to Martina Cowling for all she does in the community.
- Charity of the Year awarded to Highworth Historical Society who are keeping our town's history and heritage alive.

All worthy winners are a shining example of all that is good about our community.

We were delighted and humbled to have gained sponsorship for the awards from several businesses including Wiltshire Windows, who not only sponsored the event but also each of the awards too! Other sponsors included: Wrag Barn; Hilliers Funeral Services; Keith Davidson Photography; Minuteman Press, and Eco Signs.

On the 14 April, we launched nominations for next year's awards and added two more award categories: Young Citizen of the Year (aged 16-18), and Community Team of the Year.

Remember our goal as a community charity is to support all charitable activities in Highworth. The more we raise, the more we can provide local support. What comes to us goes out to you!

One way to find out more is to follow us on Facebook, or you can support us by making a donation at www.localgiving.org/charity/big-highworth-community-foundation.

We are looking for volunteers to help at our events and we also need two trustees. If you are interested, please email bhcf2023@outlook.com.

We look forward to a great 2025 and we thank you for your continued support.

Alison, Chris, Jayne and Kate (Trustees)



Paul Newton-Smith (2nd right), winner of Volunteer of the Year



Martina Cowling (2nd right), winner of Citizen of the Year



Caroline Pooley (3rd left), on behalf of Charity of the Year

Rotary Young Musician of the Year Competition

An afternoon of musical excellence took place at Highworth's St. Michael's Church in March.

Entered by their schools, 22 talented young musicians were competing for the Rotary title of the 'Swindon Young Musician of the Year 2025'.

It was a musical feast with performances from eight vocalists, seven pianists, two drummers, a bass guitarist, a violinist and a saxophonist.

The competitors were divided into two sections: Juniors under-14 and Seniors aged 14 to 16. Adjudicating was Thomas Graff, a distinguished musician who began playing the piano at the age of four. He has since achieved numerous accolades, including a Fellowship of the Royal School of Music. Currently he is the Musical Director of the Wessex Male Voice Choir.

The highlight of the afternoon was the naming of the Swindon Young Musician of 2025 pianist Lourdes Ma from the Deanery Academy in Swindon. She captivated the audience with her performance of 'Sonata in E flat Major (3rd mvt)' by Haydn. Lourdes also took first place in the Senior group. In the Juniors, Elizabeth Pope (piano) from St John's was placed first. Elizabeth won the Young Musician award in 2024.

Every competitor was presented with a certificate of achievement and, in addition, those awarded placings received music vouchers. For more information and pictures, visit www.rotaryswindonnorth.org.uk

In other news, our annual fundraising 'Quiz with a Ploughman's' raised more money than ever this year. Held at Supermarine in March, it raised £1,700 for the



North Wiltshire Motor Neurone Disease Association.

The Rotary Club of Swindon North and Thamesdown is dedicated to serving the local community through various initiatives and events. If Rotary interests you, please get in touch via email at rotaryswindonnorth@gmail.com, or telephone 07710 228697 (Ken) or 07712 078942 (Chris).

Ken Winslow



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First Line Support for Victims of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse experts, Society Without Abuse (SWA), has been equipping women from across Wiltshire with the knowledge to help victims of domestic abuse in the county.

The charity has been working with Wiltshire's Women's Institute to train at least 100 members as Ambassadors. Through a combination of online and in-person training, women have been learning about different types of abuse including physical, sexual, economic, coercive control, stalking and harassment, as well as how to signpost victims to the services to help them escape and recover from the trauma.

Tackling domestic abuse has been a longstanding concern for the WI. In 1975 the WI campaigned for the funding of refuges in every county; in 1988 the WI worked to make sure that domestic abuse survivors were able to access justice through the courts and in 1993 it sought to ensure that domestic abuse was adequately defined in law.

Gill Gibson-Piggott of The Wiltshire Federation of Women's Institutes said, "Because of our history of



standing up for women's causes, the WI should be a natural safe space for women. Our hope is simply that, by creating Society Without Abuse)

Ambassadors in every Wiltshire WI and talking about domestic abuse more openly, victims feel able to seek support sooner. If just one victim reaches out for help via this work it will have been worthwhile."

Kate Rowland, CEO of SWA, explained, "Domestic abuse can affect anyone of any age or background but people are often wary about asking the difficult questions when they first spot the signs. Being able to equip so many women across Wiltshire with the knowledge and confidence to ask those questions and be able to tell others where help is available will have a long-lasting impact on, one day, bringing an end to domestic abuse in our society."

For more information on SWA, visit www.societywithoutabuse.org.uk

If you need advice relating to Domestic Abuse for yourself or a friend, call Swindon's domestic abuse helpline on 01793 610610.

Mandy Hooper

Prostate Cancer Awareness

Prostate cancer, the most common cancer among men worldwide, deserves our attention and action. This disease impacts millions and yet the stigma around discussing men's health issues often prevents early detection and treatment. While the disease mainly affects men over 50, younger men are not immune. Factors like family history, ethnicity and diet can also increase risk.

Given the lack of national programmes and consequent reluctance of GPs to raise the issue of testing we believe that many men, including those in Highworth, may not fully understand the dangers that prostate cancer represents and have therefore never been tested. It is a fact that prostate cancer is now England's most common cancer, and the number of cases are growing. Current statistics indicate that 1 in 7 men will develop prostate cancer in their lifetime and early detection is key to the success of treatment.

Awareness of this disease should not just be amongst men but also their partners, wives, family, and friends. Ironically, many women are acutely aware of the dangers of breast cancer and many are regularly tested, so why is prostate

cancer testing not reflecting the same level of attention? All over the country now, local organisations are starting to promote widespread awareness and also arrange events for testing, analysis, diagnosis and follow-up advice.

The Highworth and District Lions, the Town Council, and the national charity CHAPS are reciprocating with an awareness campaign followed by a day of testing at the Highworth Community Centre in early July. This day will be staffed by medical professionals who will take a blood sample which will be sent away for analysis. This initial event will be discounted by the Highworth Lions so getting in early is recommended as numbers are limited. During May and June there will be more details circulated, including cost, the event date; and how to sign up.

Finally, please visit the Highworth and District Lions or Town Council stalls during the town's May events to register an interest. This data will help to decide if further testing days are required later in the year. Let's make Highworth a prostate cancer aware town.

Dave Hazell (on behalf of the Highworth Lions, Highworth Town Council and CHAPS)

National Trust at Buscot and Coleshill

We have a new writer! AS is a volunteer developing skills in marketing and is proving invaluable to the team.

With spring comes the beginning of activities making the most of what the National Trust has to offer, with extras for younger visitors.

There is an Explorer Pack at Ashdown House. A worksheet, a magnifying glass, binoculars and a tape measure all help in the search for interesting things on the Staircase Tour. A Tracker Pack, complete with binoculars, bug pot and nature identification cards, is



available at Badbury when you see the Welcome van and at Coleshill on Thursday and Saturday afternoons.

Calling all artists! Chastleton House, near Stow, begins its 'Inspired by Chastleton' sessions on 13 May – a unique opportunity

to create with the backdrop of a Jacobean country house. Enjoy an art focused, out-of-hours garden opening for £7 entry for all participants (including National Trust members). Please pre-book on the Chastleton House website.



See a wide range of skills on display during Oxfordshire Artweeks. Running from 14 to 18 May, the Heritage and Rural Skills Centre at Coleshill will be showcasing a group of crafters. Come along between 11am to 5pm each day and be inspired.

And finally Volunteers Week is the first week of June here at the National Trust. Our incredible volunteers give a combined 4.8 million hours of their time a year in 500 different roles. My own experience volunteering with the National Trust has given me a new perspective on where I live: The expansive history, art and nature in my surroundings have been a great source of inspiration.

AS, Marketing Volunteer

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Highworth Historical Society



Visitors to the exhibition

Success for Spring Open Day

Support for local history has always been strong in Highworth and our display on Saturday 15 March in the Council Room was testament to this.

As soon as the doors were opened we had local visitors, and those from as far afield as Derby and Nottingham, come to view the excellent displays of Highworth Station, Then and Now locations, and share an interest with Bill and Flora in Home Guard memorabilia.

These sessions are perfect for young and old to look back and see the growth and expanse of our community adding schools, housing, shops, and leisure areas. Our ever-popular display on



Paul Newton-Smith demonstrating his artistic skills

the train station this time included pictures of the remains of the station as Westop was under construction.

Feedback from some of our 200 visitors was so positive! We will endeavour to bring our displays back to the community soon as we continue to show our wares in the library and the Visit Highworth Museum, and we will be at the May Day Festival with our stall.

If you would like to see more pictures and history of Highworth, please take a look at our website: www.highworthhistoricalsociety.org.uk. Thanks to everyone who attended and special thanks to those who made it happen.

Caroline Pooley

Huggable History

'The Hugely Huggable History of the Teddy Bear' is the title of our talk on Wednesday 28 May, with Dr. Gill White as the speaker.

This talk tells the story of the teddy bear with lots of hugely huggable illustrations. But don't worry – it isn't completely soppy! The story of the teddy bear is the story of the twentieth century; and so we'll set the teddy bear into its social context and see how it has



managed to survive all the twists and turns of that momentous century and arrive in our own as a furry superstar.

We meet at St. Michael's Church, Highworth, at 7pm with the talk starting at 7:30pm.

Visitors are always welcome for a charge of £3 – cash please.

If you need more information, please contact me on 07583 928277.

Jayne Stephens

New Maker in Residence at Kelmscott Manor

The Society of Antiquaries of London, in partnership with Heritage Crafts, is thrilled to introduce basket maker Sarah Le Breton as the Maker in Residence for 2025 at Kelmscott Manor. This historic residence, once the cherished home of acclaimed writer, designer-craftsman, conservationist and revolutionary socialist William Morris, will be the backdrop for Sarah's residency between April and October.

During her residency Sarah will be focusing on the crafts of basket making and chair seat making.

Sarah's appointment brings with it the unique opportunity to reflect Morris's advocacy of heritage and the handmade, and contribute to his legacy by playing a distinctive part in the Manor's programme of public engagement. Visitors will be able to discover the crafts of basket making and chair seat making through hands-on workshops and demonstrations led by Sarah throughout her residency. Sarah will also share her skills with education groups as part of the Manor's Learning and Outreach programme.



Sarah Le Breton

Inspired by heritage baskets, Sarah Le Breton celebrates the craft form that she loves by making beautiful, practical and innovative baskets. Her aim is to showcase traditional techniques and highlight the beauty of natural materials and, in so doing create baskets, lighting features and chair seating that are perfect for modern living.

Kelmscott Manor is an internationally important site

with an assemblage of 17th to 19th century listed buildings. The house contains an exceptional collection of historic furnishings and works of art, many designed or created by William Morris (1834-96), members of his family and their creative associates. For more information visit www.sal.org.uk.

Kelmscott Manor is currently open to the public each week on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10:30am to 5pm, with the last entry to the Manor House at 4pm. Pre-booking online is advisable. A ticket is required for the house, whilst entry to the grounds is free.

Highworth Climate Talks

Heat Pumps: Magic or Myth?

One of the team at Highworth Climate Talks recently called the plumber. Sadly, the gas boiler was as good as dead. "I can get you a new gas boiler in a few weeks," the plumber offered "and it will be hydrogen-ready." But recent tests for using hydrogen in the heating of homes were quietly abandoned. Hydrogen will be reserved for large scale industrial uses, so a 'hydrogen-ready boiler' will never be fed any hydrogen.

Gas boilers are facing a crisis too. They cause carbon pollution and, in addition, gas bills are projected to rise 30% in five years and more than double by 2040 because fewer users will mean higher network charges.

So what about heat pumps? The fossil fuel companies want us to think heat pumps don't work, that they are a myth. But the humble heat pump has a sort of magic to it. It sucks in cold air and spits out hot water to heat our homes. It seems to defy all the physical laws we were taught at school. Nevertheless, it is being hailed as one of the keys to the coming 'great energy transition'.

Come and hear Ben Beanland from the Heat Pump Federation talk about heat pumps and the energy transition at 7:30pm on **Tuesday 20 May** at Highworth Methodist Church on Vicarage Lane.

John Ranford



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Highworth Town Council Recognised by Royal British Legion

The Highworth and District Royal British Legion has presented Highworth Town Council with a plaque in recognition of its ongoing support for the local branch of the Royal British Legion.

The plaque was presented by Chairman Gerry Evans and accepted by Town Clerk Deanne Rose and Highworth Town Mayor Councillor Julie Murphy. The presentation acknowledges the Council's continued assistance with the Legion's work in the community.

Gerry Evans commented, "The Town Council has consistently supported our branch and this plaque is a way of recognising and celebrating that partnership."

Mayor Councillor Julie Murphy added, "We appreciate this recognition and value the role the Legion plays in our community."



(l to r) Deanne Rose, Gerry Evans, Julie Murphy

Photo: Professional Images@ProImages

The Highworth and District Royal British Legion continues to support veterans, service personnel, and their families.

To mark this strong community spirit, Highworth Town Council is inviting residents to join in a special VE Day celebration on **Thursday 8 May**. This free, family-friendly event will take place from 12 noon to 9:30pm and will feature:

- Full-Size Replica Spitfire: An iconic tribute to the aircraft that helped secure victory.
- Military Vehicle Displays: A chance to see historic vehicles up close.
- Lighting of the Beacon: A poignant moment of remembrance on the Podium.
- Bake-off Competition with recipes from WWII.
- Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team.
- Live music from the era provided by Chelsea Millard.
- Danters Funfair: Vintage chair-o-plane, aeroplanes, and hook-a-duck.

This special event will commemorate Victory in Europe Day, bringing the community together to honour the past and celebrate unity.

Deanne Rose



Highworth Twinning Association



Safari Lunch

Safari Lunch: a meal where each course is prepared and eaten at the home of different hosts in Highworth, finally coming together for dessert at a single venue.

Everyone welcome!

Sunday 29 June, 12 noon

Tickets: £23

Available from **Visit Highworth**

Limited number, last date for purchase 14 June

Any questions? Call Jan on 01793 979271

Highworth Jazz Festival



It's back in our lovely town on Saturday 31 May, so be there or be square! Nine hours of blazing jazz across five charming venues, for jazz aficionados and novices.

Never really tried jazz? I'm reminded of my late Dad, bless him. Although he quite loved his old 78s and LP records, I'm not sure he ever quite 'got it' about jazz. "They keep going off on tangents," he'd complain. But he was a big fan of the Ed Sullivan Show that, in 1965, featured the stunning Ella Fitzgerald with Duke Ellington and his band. She belted out one of the best-

known jazz anthems: "It don't mean a thing, if it ain't got that swing..."

Maybe Dad got it then?

Organisers Ray Stephens and Martin Wellsted do it all

for the love of jazz in Highworth. This not-for-profit festival ploughs proceeds back to the musicians and venues.

Some 20 acts will weave their way through St. Michael's Church, The Wine Bar, The Highworth, the URC chapel and the Podium in the Market Square, from 2pm to 11pm. And being jazz, there's the risk of a late-night jam session...

A key theme for the festival will be Celebrating Women in Jazz, an inspired choice and important way to highlight the incredible female talent in the UK jazz scene.

The line-up and latest news is available on Facebook – search for 'Highworth Jazz Festival'.

Tickets are available at www.highworthjazzfestival.com and get your souvenir wristband on the day.

Coined in 1950s America, 'square' was jazz slang for a conformist who didn't appreciate counterculture, especially jazz music. Surely not you? Come on, give it everything you got!

Adrian Young



The Arts Society Upper Thames

We would be delighted to welcome you as a visitor to our May Lecture, 'Stonehenge' with Julian Richards on Thursday 8 May, 2pm, at Lechlade Memorial Hall.

Stonehenge is the most celebrated and sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the British Isles. This lecture explains why Stonehenge must be regarded as architectural in its layout and construction, embodying techniques that for centuries convinced antiquarians it could not have been built by 'primitive' ancient Britons but must be a product of 'sophisticated' Romans. We then explore how, over the last two centuries, this iconic structure has inspired painters, potters and poets. Blake, Turner, Constable and Moore are amongst those who have all been drawn to this magnificent ruin, resulting in a diverse catalogue of images and impressions.

Julian Richards studied archaeology at Reading University and has since worked as a professional archaeologist, in commercial archaeology, for English

Heritage, for the BBC and as an independent. He was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1992 and has an honorary doctorate. His career in broadcasting involved researching and presenting 'Meet the Ancestors' and 'Blood of the Vikings' for BBC2 and 'Mapping the Town' for Radio 4. He has written a number of English Heritage publications on Stonehenge, including the previous and current guide books to the monument and landscape. Museum work includes curating Stonehenge-related exhibitions in the UK and abroad (Germany and Austria), and he has just curated the new permanent ceramics gallery for Salisbury Museum.

Non-members are very welcome but please arrive by 1:50pm, pay £7.50 (with the correct amount on the door), but please register first at info@tasupperthames.org.uk so we know to expect and welcome you.

Rodney Mountford

Kandinsky, Constable and Cake at Lechlade Art Society

Ten very enthusiastic participants came along to try painting with acrylics on Saturday 15 March. LAS provided the opportunity after conversations with visitors who came to our exhibitions and sales and expressed an interest in learning more about painting.



Interestingly, new members often come to our painting group and say they want to use watercolour, but they find this difficult and are unhappy with their work. Most painters will agree that watercolour is the most challenging of all media. On the other hand, and in my opinion, acrylic paint is far more forgiving and exciting and therefore a logical starting point!

Using just the three primary colours, the morning

began by looking at Kandinsky's colour mixing exercise – we then painted our own, and these were immediately worthy of popping into a frame to display. Using a Winsor and Newton painting guide featuring Wilhemina Barns-Graham's abstract work, the group worked on a free, loose painting

along these lines.

Finally, the members were given a canvas board and shown 'Rainstorm over the Sea' by John Constable, illustrating strong brush strokes. Using this and other photographs, participants produced their own seascapes. Hopefully some will have gone home and are contemplating a new hobby.

Zoe Hing



Course participants with their work



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Highworth Artists' Society Exhibition



It's Highworth Artists' Society Spring exhibition time! Please come and see us over the early May bank holiday and the following week for a visual treat and the chance to pick your favourite painting from the exhibition. You can also buy paintings and cards, and enjoy a refreshing cup of tea whilst choosing! We open on Saturday 3 May until Saturday 10 May, 10am to 4pm every day.

March saw members faced with a completely different challenge: Painting real life models dressed in Medieval costume! Ian and Lynne Young joined us in their full archery regalia and treated us to different poses, stories and medieval factoids! They really were a mine of information and two hours flew by!

Hilary Sinclair



Ian and Lynne Young

Highworth Camera Club

At the time of writing, the sun is shining in lovely blue skies with a light breeze – perfect for a stroll with your camera or simply your phone. Just the tools to make memorable pictures or capture strange things!

I hope you were able to look at the exhibition in the library last month, which showcased last year's work from Camera Club members.

Looking forward, the Camera Club will be hosting a visiting judge this month for the club's competitions so far this year. June there will be a walkabout, weather permitting, at a venue yet to be decided. And we are looking forward to July when we will host professional landscape and nature photographer Jack Lodge. Have a look at his amazing images on his website: www.jacklodge.co.uk, or check him out on Facebook. If you would like to hear him speak, you will be welcome to come along on **Tuesday 8 July**, 7:30pm. There will be a small charge to non-members for this event.

If you feel inspired to take up photography or want to share your images, why not come along to one of the club's monthly meetings? We meet **every second Tuesday of the month** at the Highworth Community Centre, The Dormers, at 7:30pm. Take a look at our website for more information: www.highworthcamclub@gmail.com.

Hilary Beach

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Wrag Barn Golf Club

Sunday 9 March was a day to remember as we celebrated our annual Captain's Drive-In with 134 competitors gathered for an 8am shotgun start. The event was played in a Stableford format with teams of four, and two scores counting on each hole except on all the Par-3s where all four scores had to count. There were 'Nearest the Pin' prizes on all the Par-3s which were won by Dave Walls, Mark Whitby, David Knell and Ian Smith.

The Drive-In followed on after the golf and Lady Captain Sue Britton, Junior Captain Jake Kavanagh, and Seniors Captain Tony Gunby all teed off without incident and were probably very relieved the initiation was over. Club Captain Mark Walker was busily placing his tee when the President, Steve Griffiths, called him and Vice-Captain Andy Bright over to toast the event with a glass of port (our President is well known for his love of port and never gets presents of anything else). There were prizes for everyone who guessed the closest spot to the place where each Captains' drive would land and, once it was over we all retired into the club house for lunch, prize giving and a raffle.

Mark made a speech endorsing his anticipation of the good times ahead and thanked everyone who helped



(l to r) Mark Walker, Rob Weller, Ted Perry, Simon Perry, and Steve Griffiths

plan and facilitate the day, with special presents for Ben, last year's Captain Shaun Judd and most important of all, his wife Karen and daughter Sophie who will be a huge support during the year ahead.

Lastly the winning teams were presented with their prizes, namely Liam and Ryan Wellstead, David Scott, and

Tom Newberry (3rd with 99 points), behind Ashok Ladva, Akshay Patel, Dinesh Gohil and Richard O'Grady (runners-up with 101 points), leaving Rob Weller, Nick Dunn, and Simon and Ted Perry as the winners (with 106 points).

We had a wonderful day made even better by the glorious sunshine; special thanks to Tracey for sending it all the way from Dubai. A sincere thank you to everyone involved in the planning and running of this successful event. We look forward to a fantastic year ahead.

Verity Manners
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Going for the double

Supermarine Rugby Club

Supermarine men's team have had an excellent league season, winning 15 matches from 15 and securing 74 points from a possible 75. The team have played some exciting rugby all season and, after averaging 52 points a game, were unsurprisingly crowned champions of Counties 3 Dorset and Wilts North. In search of a historic league and cup double, the men played a cup semi-final last month – look us up to see how we got on.

We are always on the look-out for new players, so if you would like to find out more please drop us an email.

Barry Christian
supermarinememen@gmail.com

Highworth Running Club

At the end of March, on a day where the sun and drizzle battled for supremacy (neither winning), so did 300 pairs of trainers as they swapped their Sunday lunch for a Sunday saunter round the Highworth 5 Mile Race instead. That said, they were all treated to three notable courses to digest with a nice palatable entrée seeing the runners enjoy the delicate undulations of Shrivenham Road for the first mile. Miles two to four were the meandering meaty main course combo of Fresden Lane and Coleshill Road, before a quite unwanted and undigestible dessert in Eastrop Hill which really questioned everyone's appetite. Giving encouragement in the last few hundred metres met with grunted responses of "That hill!" from more than a few. For residents, it's all part of the town's charm.

But finish they did, and eco-friendly wooden medals were hung around the necks of many smiling faces as stories were swapped at the finish (mainly about the hill). The first three to cross the line, all representing the Swindon Harriers (which sorted out the team prize as well), were Harry Woods (26:07 minutes), Ben McIntyre (28:16), and Michael Gilbert (28:26). The first lady home was Philippa Brewer (Stonehenge Striders RC) in a time of 32:52 minutes, ahead of Devizes RC's Hannah Jordan (35:32) and HRC's own Tamzen Isacsson (36:16).

In the men's age-related categories, this year's winners were Michael Gilbert, Corin Wiltshire and Andy Colling whilst Philippa Brewer, Tamzen Isacsson and Tania O'Halloran also went home with the ladies' category prizes. As has now become tradition, the most treasured trophy, the Tom Bolter Cup, was awarded last to Corin as the first HRC member home.



Fancy playing cricket this Summer?

JUNIOR CRICKET

- Pre-season nets for all age groups through April
- All Stars and Dynamos kicks off on May 16th
- Junior nets on a Friday evening throughout the Summer with experienced Level 2 coaches
- Junior matches from May onwards at U9, U11, U13 and U15 age groups

ADULT CRICKET

- Pre-season nets through April
- League cricket on a Saturday
- T20 on a Wednesday
- Occasional Sunday friendlies

We're also looking for Scorers, Umpires and Volunteers

For further details please contact -
<https://lechlade.play-cricket.com/>
Phone : Jon on 07484337189
Email : info@lechladecc.org

The club would like to thank everyone who took part and of course everyone who turned up to help or spectate. It was a delight to see such a well organised event with plenty of atmosphere. A link to the complete race results can be found on the club's website.

Jason Daniels
www.highworthrunningclub.co.uk
Photograph courtesy of Adi Whittington



300

Highworth Town Women's Walking Football Club

Highworth Town Women's Walking Football team are looking for new players to join them. Whether or not you've played before, all players are welcome. We train on **Monday nights, 8:30pm to 9:30pm** on the 3G pitch at New College Swindon.

The first session is free and then it's £3 a session after that. Any ladies are welcome to join. If you're looking to get back into football after taking a break, or just looking to get started with a new hobby and just want to get fit, then come along and give it a try.

If interested, please drop Becky a message (07825 336479) to find out more details.

Graham Seeley



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Shrivenham Park Golf Club

May is here, bringing with it two bank holidays and two bank holiday competitions, as well as the other club competitions played during the month. Pam continues to look after the Thursday activities, whilst Adi will continue to look after the Men's. The Club Captains for Ladies', Men, and Juniors' had their Drive-In six weeks ago and are now in full swing.

In terms of results, our Captain's Drive-In winning teams were T. Tuck, S. Hannon, Z. Eve, and N. Gosling (good to see a lady in a team), and D. Mussard, M. Popkiss, M. Boase and J. Penfold (pictured). Nick Godwin bested Stewart Bentley to win the Final Medal by a single shot (scoring 69), and the ladies have now completed their Eclectic scores for the season and are playing summer season competitions.

Due to the membership widening (member numbers, not members themselves) our newly extended catering is being enjoyed by many, with favourites



Drive-In winners

Highworth Town Football Club

Highworth Town went down to defeat in their final home league fixture, losing 2-1 to Pershore Town. Nonetheless, their play-off place had been confirmed with a 3-2 success the previous week over long-time leaders Hartpury University. April will see an away play-off game with the opponents to be confirmed. All to play for after another fine campaign.

Derek Lloyd

being the Sunday lunches or 9 and 18-hole breakfasts. We cater for individuals or groups and look forward to welcoming anyone who is interested in dropping in for refreshments.

If you're interested in learning golf or developing your game, we're able to offer Ladies' coaching **Wednesday afternoons** as well as Beginner coaching (also Wednesdays) between 1pm and 2:30pm, although this can be tailored to fit around school pick-ups. Junior coaching continues on **Saturdays**. For more information, please give the clubhouse a call.

Latterly, but of probably the greatest importance, SPGC would like to thank the Highworth Lions for their kindness in providing a defibrillator to the club. Its mere presence will be of great comfort to not only the players but the local area. Thank you.

Carole Lee
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HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Highworth Town Council
MEDIEVAL MAY DAY EVENT**

**Saturday 3rd May 2025
10am - 4pm**

**Licensed Bar
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Elias Performing Arts,
May Pole, Morris Dancers &
Jack in The Green**

Over 60 independent stalls

**The College of Chivalry are providing a
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have a go Archery, a Knights Space,
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Calligraphy, a Barbers/Surgeons
Space & Wooden Stocks**

**A re-enactment of a
knights battle**

Highworth Town Council Secures Funding for Tree and Hedge Replanting Project

Highworth Town Council is pleased to announce that we have successfully secured funding from the Great Western Community Forest to support a replanting initiative following recent essential tree works.

As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining and enhancing the town's green spaces, we recently carried out extensive tree work along the hedgerow between the golf course driveway and the allotment site. This work involved the removal of nine hawthorn trees that were no longer safe.

With the funding secured, we will now move forward with a comprehensive replanting plan. This will include planting a new beech hedge along the length of the allotment site and six new trees to replace those that were removed. These efforts will help restore the natural landscape, support local wildlife, and contribute to the town's long-term environmental sustainability.

This project has been funded by the Defra Trees for Climate programme and the Great Western Community Forest. The new planting is part of over 200 hectares of woodland, trees, and hedges being planted within the Great Western Community Forest this year. When fully grown, each hectare of new tree planting will annually capture and store around 295 tonnes of carbon dioxide, helping to mitigate climate change.

We would like to thank the Great Western Community Forest, Swindon Borough Council, and the Defra Trees for Climate programme for their support in making this project possible.

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Highworth Town Council and WRDEUP Committee Deliver New Benches at Northview Play Area

Highworth Town Council, with funding from the WRDEUP Committee, has successfully installed two brand-new benches at the newly refurbished Northview Play Area. The addition of seating comes in direct response to public feedback, ensuring that families, carers, and visitors have a comfortable place to sit and enjoy the space.

The WRDEUP Committee, represented by Chris Laken, provided the necessary funds to support the project, fulfilling a key request from local residents during community consultations. The lack of seating had been a common concern, and the new benches now offer a much-needed improvement to the park.

The project was guided by the Play Area Working Party, led by Chairman Councillor Natalie Key, which has played a key role in shaping the improvements to Northview Play Area. The working party has been instrumental in gathering public feedback, identifying community needs, and ensuring the park meets the expectations of local families.

Councillor Key said "The refurbished play area has been a fantastic addition for families in Highworth, and we're delighted that, thanks to the WRDEUP Committee, we've been able to provide the seating that residents asked for." Chris Laken from the WRDEUP Committee added "Supporting local projects like this is exactly what the Committee aimed to do with surplus funds, leaving a lasting legacy from the WRDEUP Committee (2014-2023). We're proud to have helped make Highworth's community spaces more accessible and enjoyable for everyone."



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HIGHWORTH CELEBRATES

**THURSDAY 8TH MAY 2025
12 NOON - 9.30PM**

**Full-Size Replica Spitfire
Military Vehicle Displays
Coleshill Auxiliary
Research Team
Bake off competition with
recipes of the era
Afternoon Tea Party with
Residents from local care
homes
Danters Funfair - vintage
chair-o-plane, aeroplanes
and hook a duck
Ice Cream Van**

**Children's activities area
to include a Morse Code
Challenge, Design a
poster, Crossword Puzzle
and more.
Pupils from the local
schools attending.
Live Music of the Era by
Chelsea Millard
VE Day Tribute
Lighting the Beacon
Singing 'I Vow to Thee
My Country'**

REPRESENTATIVES

News from Highworth's Mayor



My recent Mayor's Charity Event at Wrag Barn was a resounding success, filled with fun, laughter and, most importantly, a generous outpouring of support for a very worthy cause. Thanks to the dedication of our community we raised essential funds for Highworth-Forget-Me-Not – an initiative that provides crucial support to those in need.

A heartfelt 'thank you' goes out to all of my sponsors and everyone who attended to show their support. Your presence made the event not only enjoyable but impactful for our community.

Looking ahead, I am excited but nervous about my next big challenge – a tandem parachute jump! Be sure to keep an eye out for the donation link on the Highworth Town Council Facebook page, or you can make a donation by contacting the Highworth Town Council office on 01793 762377.

Plans are being finalised for two major events in Highworth:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Saturday 3 May | May Day (Medieval Theme) |
| Thursday 8 May | VE Day. The High Street will be transformed back to the 1940s. To keep updated follow Highworth Town Council's Facebook page. |

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, it's also important to highlight the 2024/2025 Council's Report. The past year has been a period of significant progress, with numerous major projects moving forward or being successfully completed, benefitting Highworth in numerous ways.

For more details on these accomplishments, please visit the Highworth Town Council website at www.highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk and check out the Annual Assembly Minutes from 25 March 2025. It's an exciting time for our town and we look forward to the continued progress.

Thank you once again for your support and let's keep making a difference in Highworth!

If you wish for me to attend any events please email my secretary Liz at admin@highworthtowncouncil.gov.uk.

Best regards

Julie Murphy, Mayor and Chair

HIGHWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

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Tel. 01793 762377 / 763511

St. Michael's Church Highworth

The church is open daily for private prayer.

10:15am Sunday Service

We meet in St. Michael's Church and groups for children and youth are held during this service, with refreshments being served after the service.

The service is streamed live at www.twitch.tv/stmichaelshighworth or on YouTube by searching 'St Michaels Church Highworth'.

Morning Worship is held on the **first, third and fifth Sundays of the month**. Holy Communion is held on the **second and fourth Sundays of the month**.

8:45am Holy Communion

On the **first and third Sunday of the month**.

10:15am Midweek Communion

On the **third Wednesday of each month**, from 11am. Coffee and cake will be served from 10:15am.

Prayers

Tuesday Prayers from 9am.

Friday Blessings from 9:15am.

The **second and fourth Mondays**; see Prayer Hour in the Church Room at 7:30pm (excluding bank holidays).

We remember those we love and miss

Cythia Freemantle, John Pritchard

We welcome in Holy Baptism

Lily Mack, Ivy Smith, Eloise Willis

Praying for the roads in the town

04 May	The Green and Grove Hill
11 May	Grove Orchard and Hammond Close (includes Cobbett Court and Styles Court)
18 May	Hampton and Hanover House
25 May	Highworth's schools (students and staff) Blackworth Industrial Estate

St. Leonard's Parish Church Stanton Fitzwarren

4 May	Morning Praise, 9:30am
11 May	Family Service, 'The Emmaus Road', 11am
18 May	Team Service at St. Margaret's, 10am
25 May	Holy Communion, 11:30am

Stanton Coffee morning meets monthly at Stanton House Hotel, 10:15am for coffee and chat, and then we have a speaker at 11am. On **Wednesday 21 May** our speaker is Bishop Neil of Swindon.

The church building will be open every Wednesday in school term time from 10am to 4pm, or telephone Liz and Roger (01793 762935) to organise for the building to be open for you to visit. Please go to www.stantonchurch.info for updates.



With thanks to all those who have sponsored the floodlighting of St. Michael's Church



25, 26, 27/4/25
Frank Dean

Your 20th anniversary on the 25.4.25. We all miss you as much now as we did on your 1st anniversary. Love Jean, Beverley, Sharon and families

21/5/25
Eric Craigie

Another year passes. In loving memory of Eric Craigie. Sadly missed by Joan, Emma, Kate and all your family

Floodlighting forms are available from St. Michael's Church office, Vicarage Lane, or the Church website at www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk/floodlighting. Your dedication will appear in this magazine.

E: office@stmichaelshighworth.co.uk • www.stmichaelshighworth.co.uk

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Gas	Emergency 0800 111999
Electricity	Emergency 105
Water	Emergency 0800 3169 800

NON-EMERGENCY

Police	Non-Emergency 101
NHS	Non-Emergency 111
Pest Control	Non-Emergency 07789 781151

BUSES

Stagecoach Swindon	01793 521415
Thamesdown Transport	01793 428400
Dial-a-Ride	01793 616050
Community Transport	01793 617828
Traveline	0871 200 2233

COLLEGES

Cirencester College	01285 640994
New College Swindon, Queens Drive Campus	01793 611470
North Star Campus	01793 491591

LAW & ORDER

Crimestoppers	0800 555111
Victim Supportline	0808 16 89 111
Action Fraud	0300 123 2030

COUNCILS

Highworth Town Council	01793 762377
Swindon Borough Council	01793 463000
Streetsmart	01793 445501

FIRE SAFETY

Home fire safety check	0800 389 7849
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DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS

Highworth Surgery	01793 762218
Elm Tree Surgery, (Shrivenham)	01793 782207
Great Western Hospital	01793 604020

LIBRARY

Highworth Library	01793 463500
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RECREATION

Highworth Rec	01793 762602
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PHARMACIES

Highworth Pharmacy	01793 762220
Home Farm Pharmacy	01793 861392
Jones Graham Pharmacy (Shrivenham)	01793 783336

PRESCHOOL/NURSERY

Eastrop Nursery	01793 763772
Westrop Nursery	01793 762897
South Marston Pre-school	01793 823379

SCHOOLS

Eastrop Infants	01793 763772
Southfield Junior	01793 762210
Westrop Primary	01793 762897
Warneford Secondary	01793 762426

TAXIS

Veezu	01793 701701
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TRAINS

National Rail Enquiries	03457 484950
Great Western Railways	03457 000125
Disabled and Assisted Travel	08001 971329

OTHER SERVICES

Citizens Advice Bureau	08444 994114
Trading Standards (business)	0207 830 6000
Trading Standards (consumers)	03454 04 05 06
Alcohol and Drug Service	01793 695405
Samaritans	01793 537373
Women's Refuge	01793 610610

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Opinions expressed or implied in any contributions are not necessarily those of the editor or management committee.

No responsibility can be accepted for any error of fact in the magazine or website. Please inform the editor of any errors so they can be rectified.

Contributions:

May be published in the magazine and/or the web. Make clear any limitations you have about what, how and when we may publish your contribution.

Email is preferred; otherwise deliver to The Bridge Centre, 8 Sheep Street, Highworth.

Make sure you are writing for a general audience, not just your own organisation. News stories should not exceed 150 words. If it's too long we will ask you to cut it. Articles

may be longer but get in touch first to save the inconvenience of a rejection. Photographs and advertising artwork should be clear, with good contrast. JPEG electronic format is preferred. The print process requires images ideally to be 300dpi for best results. Low resolution images, that appear clear on screen, will print blurred depending on the size and resolution of the image supplied.

Make sure any people in photos agree that the photo can be published in the magazine and on the web. Get parental consent in the case of minors.

We reserve the right to edit contributions and to not publish any contribution or advertisement that is either unsuitable for our format or is inconsistent with our editorial policy.

Submission Deadlines:

1st of the month before publication – news, articles, advertising and letters.

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